

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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Contact: Ernie Seneca  
Phone: 919/733-5612

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**GOV. EASLEY WAGERS WITH GEORGIA THAT FANTASIA WILL WIN "AMERICAN IDOL"**  
*Blueberries, Peaches and NASCAR Tickets at Stake*

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley is betting Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue that Fantasia Barrino of High Point, N.C. will beat Diana DeGarmo of Snellville, Ga. in this week's finals of the "American Idol" televised singing competition.

Easley is wagering two VIP package tickets to the UAW-GM Quality 500 NASCAR race Oct. 16 at Lowe's Motor Speedway in Concord. His bet also includes a flat of 16 pints of blueberries from Smith Nursery in Johnston County.

"North Carolina is home to NASCAR and the world's greatest racing," Easley said. "The blueberries just sweeten the deal."

Gov. Perdue countered with two VIP package tickets to the Bass Pro Shops MBNA 500 NASCAR race Oct. 31 at Atlanta Motor Speedway. He also bet a bushel of peaches.

"The first lady and I are digging out our recipe for peach preserves," Easley said. "We might even send Gov. Perdue a jar as a thank you when we win."

Last week, Easley wrote a letter to Fantasia congratulating the singer on her success and wishing her continued good luck. He also has a standing invitation to her to come to the State Capitol and sing "What Are You Doing The Rest of Your Life," which she has performed during the competition.

Fantasia and DeGarmo are the final two contestants on Fox television's "American Idol" show. Raleigh native Clay Aiken finished second in last year's show and has become one of the hottest recording artists in the country. Aiken came to the State Capitol last May, met with Easley and sang "On The Wings Of Love."

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